THE

Harbinger of Light.

A MONTHLY JOURNAL

DEVOTED TO

ZOISTIC SCIENCE, FREE THOUGHT, SPIRITUALISM AND THE HARMONIAL PHILOSOPHY.

"*Dawn approaches, Error is passing away, Men arising shall hail the day.*"

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CONTENTS.

During the past month a lively controversy has been going on in two of the daily papers in reference to the nature and origin of the manifestations occurring through the mediumship of Dr. Slade. The *Herald* of August 30th, gave a moderately fair report of two seances they had been privileged to have with Dr. S, in which they admit that some of the phenomena is certainly marvellous. A few days after, through a similarity in name, a letter intended for one of the staff of another paper, acceding to a request for a sitting, was sent to the editor of the *Herald*, who, accompanied by two friends, presented themselves for a third sitting and were somewhat chagrined to find they were not expected. Dr. S., however, consented to give them the sitting, at the conclusion of which they appeared to be both satisfied and astonished at the results. No report appeared for four days, during which time, whether from business considerations or other outside influences, the editorial mind seems to have undergone a "marvellous" change, for on the 6th ult appears a virulent article condemnatory of Dr. Slade, and characterising the manifestations as conjuring. The animus of the writer is apparent all through it, and any unprejudiced person reading it in connexion with their previous article would find ample refutation of the theories propounded and slanderous insinuations introduced without going further. As, however, the public mind is generally prejudiced against Spiritualism and all that pertains to it, it is as well that in the interest of truth a champion has been found who under the *nom de plume* of "Pyrrho" has in the columns of the *Age* systematically knocked down the unsound props upon which the *Herald* erected its theories. "Pyrrho" appears to write from an impartial stand-point—he disclaims being a Spiritualist. Impressed by the fact that many eminent men of science have not thought it beneath their dignity to investigate the so-called Spiritual phenomena, and in doing so have demonstrated to their satisfaction the existence of a previously unknown force, he found in this sufficient justification for him to follow in their footsteps, and had, up to the time of the publication of the second *Herald* article, as the result of several sittings been unable to discover any indications of fraud or imposition on the part of Dr. Slade, but the publication of that article induced him to pay another visit with the view of testing the theories there propounded.

In his preliminary remarks he enumerates the conditions under which conjurors perform their marvels, and then follows the pith of his argument. He says :—

"What do I find about this wonder-worker to support the theory of conjuring? He is not on a stage; he is not at a distance from the observer, and he works just as well with the observer's tools as he does with his own. The conjuror works by gas light; Slade in broad daylight. The conjuror has the free use of his legs and hands; Slade never rises from his chair, and *he never has the use of more than one hand* and not often of any at all, since it is necessary, in order to complete the circuit by which the alleged force travels, that the spectators should hold both his hands in theirs during the occurrence of the phenomena. The conjuror has his own stage and his own apparatus, but Slade will sit in your room and use *your slate*,; nay, more, he will let *your slate* be held in *your hand* while the writing is being produced. In your Friday evening's contemporary I read what claimed to be an exposure of Slade-ism from the conjuring side of the question; and though I saw at once that the narrative was loose and inconclusive, and evidently not the work of an expert in the study of evidence, there was just enough in it to rouse my curiosity afresh and send me, in company with a friend—a very orthodox friend indeed—straight to Slade's room to demand satisfaction in the shape of a seance then and there. I found that Mr. Slade had read his exposure, and treated it in a very philosophic spirit of indifference, as something he was tolerably used to by this time. We determined however, to make use of the adverse points set out in the narration and he readily coincided. It was said, for instance, that he had on slippers; he now showed his feet encased in tightly-laced shoes It was said that he had wires and strings about his person; he accordingly bared his arms to show there were none. It was said that he used his legs and feet under the table to simulate the touch of hands; he therefore placed his feet, as long as he could endure the contortion, upon a chair, exposed to easy view, having first shown conclusively that he could not extend them far enough, without a visible effort, to touch his visitors at the opposite side. It was said that he wrote the message on the slate beforehand. I took my own slate, three-leaved, with wooden covers, and wrote my own question. It is

said that he might as well have sat in a dark room, as the writing on the slate was done under the table. On one occasion the writing (on my own slate) was done *on the top of the head of my friend.* At another seance I had seen it done on the top of the table, in the very centre, with only the medium's finger touching the cover. It is said that he invariably holds the slate himself. On Friday night, my friend held it once in conjunction with the medium, and *once in his own hand alone*, the writing being audible on both occasions. It is said that the messages are short, and, therefore, quickly written. At one seance it covered the whole slate, and apparently only ceased for want of room. I daresay I could easily enlarge this already very long list of discrepancies between the facts and the allegation of the facts; but they are quite enough to establish what I set out with, namely, that the work of stating evidence is really a very difficult matter, requiring accuracy of observation, logical acumen, and a knowledge of the laws of evidence that are seldom or never to be found in the crowd who attend these kind of exhibitions, rather to gratify, an idle sense of wonderment, or else to justify some foregone conclusion or pre-judgment. I will illustrate the loose habits of thought that bring people to the work of observancy by one example that was offered by my experience on Friday night. Mr. Slade placed a heavy hand-bell on the floor under the table. He then placed both his hands on the table in connection with mine, and asked my fellow-sitter to put his feet on the top of his. After this was done the bell shortly rose up, and struck heavily under the centre of the table, and then came out by my friend's side; and finally, after touching his face, fell over on the table. The ordinary observer sees nothing in this, but the movement of a hand-bell projected into space from its state of rest and following the natural line of projection. But as a matter of fact the line of projection is not followed, in other words, the bell moves first in an upward direction, secondly at right angles in a lateral one, and thirdly in a curvilinear one."

The only answer the *Herald* can give to this is an extract from Foster's Life of Dickens, giving an account of some similar marvels performed by a French soldier at Boulogne, whom they are pleased to call a "juggler," but who in reality was the "Zouave Jacobe," a most remarkable spiritual medium who performed innumerable cures by the laying on of hands both at Boulogne and Paris. "Pyrrho," unaware of this fact, contents himself by pointing out portions of the Slade phenomena which is unparalled, and quoting from Southey's Life of Wesley as a set-off. The *Herald* returns to the charge by suggesting the existence of machinery in Dr. Slade's room, but they are blind to the fact that he has and continues to give sittings at private houses, where tables slates, and all the paraphernalia are supplied by the investigators. We give an account of one of these furnished by the gentleman at whose house the seances ware held:—

"Incidents at a series of three sittings with Dr. Slade at the house of Mr. Parrant, dyer, Lonsdale-street, September 5th. Five persons present at each seance. Mr. P. being the only one present through the series, took notes.

"Three messages in answer to questions were written on the slate whilst held by Dr. Slade under corner of the table. Slate held by sitter at opposite corner of table to Dr. S. was violently wrenched three times, so that he had difficulty in retaining possession of it. More questions were asked and answered while Dr. S. held the slate. It was then held by three of the sitters, who obtained writing. A chair on which a lady was sitting was nearly pulled from under her. A closed slate was held on one of the sitter's shoulders, and whilst there messages were written, the writing being distinctly heard by all. A few notes were played on the accordeon, and the interior mechanism taken out by the invisible power. The table, 3ft. x 4ft. 2in., was raised about two feet from the floor, and remained suspended whilst fourteen was counted.

"Second Sitting.—Several of sitters held the slate, and obtained writing without Dr. S. holding it. The accordeon held in one of Dr. Slade's hands played a beautiful tune; all saw the bellows drawn out and pressed in by the invisible power. A large bell was lifted and rung, then struck the table violently and was thrown a distance of eight feet away. One of the sitters was lifted in his chair about two feet from the floor. Mr. P. then put his chair on the table and sat on it; the chair, table, and sitter were lifted about three feet from the floor.

"Third sitting.—Slate writing as before, all who held the slate obtained writing; one of the messages was, 'This is a law of God, not of man; you shall see more of us soon.' A chair came from the corner of the room and struck violently one of the sitter's chairs. The spirits were asked to take the slate from Dr. S. and convey it to a sitter on the opposite side; this was done and repeated, both Dr. Slade's hands being on the table at the time. Mr. P. distinctly felt a hand take the slate from him, giving it first three strong pulls. A lady's handkerchief was taken and tied into a complicated knot. The table was suspended over three feet from the ground whilst forty was counted aloud by one of the sitters. The medium then became entranced, sang, and played the harmonium, and concluded with an impressive address. Of twelve slates provided by the individuals who sat, eleven were written upon during the seances, and five of the sitters distinctly saw the materialized hands."

In the foregoing well-attested cases the *Herald's* theory entirely fails to cover the phenomena. It is absurd to imagine that machinery adequate to produce the above astounding results could be carried in the pocket of an ordinary evening suit and adjusted before the eyes of the household. The *Herald*, however, having taken up the conjuring theory, tries its best to sustain it, and the other member of its staff writes a letter in support of his principal, traversing nearly the same ground, and implying simplicity and gullibility on the part of "Pyrrho." This is followed up by some stale matter *in re* Dr. Lankester, and a restoration of the humbug and jugglery theory. "Pyrrho's" next letter is somewhat of a clincher, and from it we reprint the following, extracted from the "(British) Quarterly Journal of Science" for April last, written by Professor Zollner, in reference to his theory of a fourth dimension in space, which he claims to have demonstrated through Dr. Slade. He says:—

"'If a single cord has its ends tied together and sealed, an intelligent being, having the power voluntarily to produce on this cord four dimensional bendings and movements, must be able, *without loosening the seal*, to tie one or more knots in this endless cord.' Then follows the account of the experiment under Dr. Slade's mediumship. 'Now, this experiment has been successfully made within the space of a few minutes in Leipzig, on the 17th December, 1877, at eleven o'clock a.m., in the presence of Mr. Henry Slade, the American. The accompanying plate shows the strong cord with the four knots in it, as well as the position of my hands, to which Mr. Slade's left hand and that of another gentleman were joined. While the *seal always remained in our sight on the table*, the unknotted cord was firmly pressed by my two thumbs against the table's surface, and the remainder of the cord hung down in my lap. I had desired the tying of only one knot, yet the four knots—minutely represented on the drawing—were formed, after a few minutes, in the cord. The hempen cord had a thickness of about one millim.; it was strong and new, having been bought by myself. Its single length, before the tying of the knots, was about 148 centimetres; the length therefore of the doubled string, the ends having been joined, about 74 centimes. The ends were tied together in an ordinary knot, and then—protruding from the knot by about 1.5 centimes—were laid on a piece of paper and sealed to the same with ordinary sealing-wax, so that the knot just remained visible at the border of the seal. The paper round the seal was then cut off, as shown in the illustration. The above-described sealing of two such strings, with my own seal, was effected by myself in my apartments, on the evening of 16th December, 1877, at nine o'clock, under the eyes of several of my friends and colleagues, and *not* in the presence of Mr. Slade. Two other strings of the same quality and dimensions were sealed by Wilhelm Weber with his seal, and in his own rooms, on the morning of 17th December, at half-past ten a.m. With these four cords I went to the neighbouring dwelling of one of my friends, who had offered to Mr. Henry Slade the hospitalities of his house, so as to place him exclusively at my own and my friend's disposition, and for the time withdrawing him from the public. The seance in question took place in my friend's sitting-room immediately after my arrival. I, myself, selected one of the four sealed cords, and in order never to lose sight of it before we sat down at the table, I hung it around my neck—the seal in front *always within my sight*. During the seance, as previously stated, I constantly kept the seal—remaining unaltered—before me on the table. Mr. Slade's *hands remained all the time in sight*; with the left he often touched his forehead, complaining of painful sensations. The portion of the string hanging down rested on my lap,—out of sight, it is true,—but Mr. Slade's hands always remained visible to me. *I particularly noticed* that Mr. Slade's hands were not withdrawn or changed in position. He himself appeared to be perfectly passive, so that we cannot advance the assertion of his having tied those knots by his conscious will, but only that they, under these detailed circumstances, *were formed in his presence without visible contact, and in a room illuminated by bright daylight.* According to the reports so far published the above experiment seems also to have succeeeded in Vienna, in presence of Mr. Slade, although under less stringent conditions. Those of my readers who wish for further information on other physical phenomena which have taken place in Mr. Slade's presence, I refer to these two books. I reserve to later publication in my own treatises the description of further experiments obtained by me in twelve seances with Mr. Slade, and, as I am expressly authorised to mention, in the presence of my friends and colleagues, Prof. Fechner, Prof. Wilhelm Weber, the celebrated electrician from Gottingen, and Herr Scheibner, Professor of Mathematics in the University of Leipzig, *who are perfectly convinced of the reality of the observed facts, altogether excluding imposture or prestidigitation.* Some other still more surprising experiments —prepared by me with a view to further testing this theory of space—have succeeded, though Mr. Slade thought their success impossible. The sympathising and intelligent reader will be able to understand my delight caused thereby. Mr. Slade produced on me and on my friends the impression of his being a gentleman. the sentence pronounced against him in London necessarily excited our moral sympathy, *for the physical facts observed by us in so astonishing a variety in his presence negatived on every reasonable ground the supposition that he in one solitary case had taken refuge in wilful imposture.* Mr. Slade, in our eyes therefore,

was innocently condemned—a victim of his accuser's and his judge's limited knowledge.'"

After this the *Herald* subsides a little, but its impudence is on a par with its egotism. Dr. Slade having offered to submit himself to a committee of reputable citizens, in whom the public would have confidence, the *Herald* has the affrontery to suggest that the appointment of said committee be placed in their hands, and that two of their staff should be included in it! This is about the coolest piece of impudence we have met with for some time. In the first place having come to a foregone conclusion as to the nature of the phenomena entirely unfits them for impartial investigation; but setting aside this, it is not likely the public would have confidence in a committee appointed by the least influential journal in Melbourne. Before the publication of this the committee referred to was formed and has, up to the present time, held three sittings with satisfactory results, the report of which will be published in due course. A large amount of evidence in support of the genuineness of Dr. Slade's mediumship has accumulated during the past month from which, in conclusion, we select the following: The first is from the "Own Correspondent" of the *Bendigo Advertiser*, who after describing his examination of the room and table and a series of successful slate writing experiments concludes as follows:—

"This ended the writing part of the seance, but the manifestations which ensued were of a still more exciting and extraordinary character. The table rose under our hands, and remained poised in mid-air for several seconds—a chair turned itself half-round without apparent contact—I felt myself touched as it were, playfully, on the right side—that furthest from the medium—about half a dozen times, while my stick, which I had deposited in a corner of the room, several feet distant from where the medium was sitting, took a flying leap, and fell down into the opposite corner. The seance closed with the playing of an accordeon held by Dr. Slade with one hand under the table, the music mysteriously elicited from the instrument being accompanied by the ringing of a handbell that he had deposited upon the floor, which bell was pitched into a corner of the room at the close of its share in the performance. During the whole series of these latter manifestations my feet were firmly placed over Dr. Slade's—at his request—and except during the playing of the accordeon, both his hands were upon the table. Having faithfully reported what I saw and heard at this interesting interview, I leave your readers to draw their own conclusions as to the origin ot the phenomena. I may add that the slate, with the 'spirit' message quoted above still upon it, is now in my own possession."

The following letter is particularly apposite to the *Herald* objections, it is from a gentleman at Geelong who, from experience in conjuring and legerdemain, is probably more competent to judge of the adequacy of these to account for the phenomena than the writers of the journal referred to:—

"I must admit that I was very much impressed with the manifestations through him. I scarcely expected so much satisfaction. I went with a friend to his hotel, and found him apparently waiting for us. I was much pleased with his manner, being gentlemanly and straightforward. We took our own slates, and by way of further precaution I had a piece of coloured pencil, or rather crayon, the colour being green. As soon as we were seated the raps came in different parts of the room, and on the table in great abundance, and the slate writing was soon obtained, and in such a variety of positions—the slates in some instances being placed on the table with pencil between—as convinced me of the groundlessness of the conjuring theory. My own green pencil was frequently used, a little bit being chipped off for the purpose, which effectually dispelled any idea of the writing being prepared beforehand, which itself would have been impossible from the slates being brought with us. I watched Dr. Slade very closely, and having had a long experience in conjuring and legerdemain myself, there are very few of the resources of the conjurer's art with which I am not familiar—such as the various devices for drawing off the attention of the spectator at a critical moment, and other methods which I have used when giving entertainments in that line, but with all my closest observation I could detect nothing like trickery in any form. The Doctor gave us another sitting in the evening, when some additional phenomena occurred. Slate-writing on my friend's head; my leg being pulled, apparently with fingers, the medium being at such a distance from me and having his legs on view that he could not physically have done it. A bedstead in one corner of the room, considerably out of reach of the medium, gave a violent lurch out into the room, and finally the table at which we were sitting was lifted bodily from the floor, our hands being all off it. Altogether, the phenomena seemed to be thoroughly genuine. What it was caused by I am not prepared to say. I have never yet been able to give in my adhesion completely to the spirit theory; there are so many forces in nature of which we absolutely know nothing, that I have always been chary of assigning particular theories to account for unusual phenomena."

SPIRITUAL TEACHINGS.

If, as it has been said, men carry with them into the unseen the attainments gained in this life, and all the faculties of mind whereby they are still capable of improving the advantages by which they are surrounded, then we have every reason to believe that our departed friends are competent to aid us in the realisation of important conclusions relative to the present or future life of man.

The radical change for the better, in every respect, which we believe to attend the removal of our thoughtful and intelligent fellow-men to a higher state of existence, imparts to the revelations of modern Spiritualism a value which is more particularly discovered when we are willing to try the communications in the light of reason and common sense, and to apply them to the wants which ever arise as the result of the development of mankind.

With the acknowledged necessity for more light upon every subject which has to do with man's present and future welfare, we are surprised that the opportunities afforded by the modern spiritualistic movement have not been accepted with avidity, or at least been tested to the fullest extent. We are thankful, however, to believe, that even though the *minority* alone have been found willing to risk their reputation and character in the enquiry into the claims of Spiritualism as applied to the practical necessities of mankind, the day will assuredly come when the *majority* also shall join in the same good work, and then such an advance may be looked for in the real prosperity of the race, as shall literally change the desert into a garden of the most beautiful and attractive character. In the meantime, we desire to be faithful to our convictions, and to do what we can to help forward the good work, even in the face of every obstacle. It is with this object in view we present the communications received from our friends, and are pleased to have the opportunity now of calling attention to those which follow, and which, we believe, are calculated to improve the tone of a thoughtful mind.

I.

"You ask for the source of Inspiration such as man is justified in regarding as the voice of God, and whereby the Divine Will is revealed for man's guidance. Now, understand that God's will is written on all things as certainly as that these things exist; and man is no exception to this rule. The inspiration is the awakening of man's faculty of reason to search for the laws of his being, and then to live in harmony with them. Here you have the only reliable inspiration which will aid man in his growth, and secure his harmonious development. Hence it has been said frequently to man, that it is not necessary to say "lo! here, or lo! there;" to stand gazing up to the heavens, or to dig down into the earth; to depend on any outside source at all, indeed; but rather to look within, and to find *there*, in the well-regulated mind, the source of strength, and the voice of direction which shall lead him into the green pastures of a truly happy life. The voices of inspiration are all around man, and find their echoing point in the secret chamber of his own spirit, when the avenues are kept open and free from impediments. It is the voice of God to the individual soul that is alone authoritative; in the judgment of his reason, he will resolve the command into its most appropriate form of action; and then it is, that God's intention concerning man is most perfectly fulfilled. Written inspiration, as it might be termed, is but the formulating or re-echoing of man's ideas, which he supposes to represent the will of God concerning himself or his fellow creature; and these statements, besides being liable to distortion, can scarcely be expected to be adapted to universal necessity. Hence, whatever the utility of written or uttered inspiration, there is no room to make these dogmatic, seeing that every individual must be guided by a strict regard for the inner monitor, who will make it apparent what course is suited to him individually."

Is there not a liability, under these circumstances, of men coming into conflict, as the result of acting in opposi-

tion to one another, and so of throwing society into confusion?

"To this question I might answer '*Yes*,' and '*No*.' 'Yes,' as the consequence of ignorance, and the want of a recognition of the claims of others on our consideration of all questions of development and growth. And 'No' when it is understood that all inspiration is in unison with the general welfare of man, and that the laws of growth are adapted to secure harmony, when properly understood and faithfully obeyed. One of the prime factors in the institution of self-government, is the recognition, the cultivation, and strict obedience to the claims on the whole or the part; and that may be summed up in the precept, 'do unto others as you would have others do unto you;' a principle of human love, and regard for the happiness of others, and the attainment of which is in perfect accord with all *true, individual*, and *interior* inspiration. You may rely upon it that what I have said is the result of observation founded on long experience. Give it your serious consideration, and you will find with me that the path of life is a bright and happy one, wheron are to be realised all the uses of which man is capable, progressive steps through stage after stage of existence, and leading to that perfection which God hath designed to be the lot of the man whom He hath created in His own image. Your friends here greet you. They bask in the sunshine of a higher life, it is true, but cannot forget that it is the privilege of the *higher* to aid the *lower*; and thus to draw up, and draw out their brethren in the flesh, nearer and nearer to their own sphere, that in due time the happy union may be consummated, which shall both increase their usefulness, and fulfil the glowing aspirations which they wish to awaken in the breasts of their brethren who still dwell amid the shadows of the earth-life."

II.

"We greet you from afar, as it seems to you, but there is but a step between us after all, and that step taken, will introduce you into our midst as really as you are now among your kindred on earth. Spiritual relationship is the union of all spirits, however divided by location. Your mind is distracted and divided by the materialistic circumstances of earth-life; but once get rid of this impediment and you will find that the union, a'though not before recognised, has ever existed; and if this be so, that union is intact now between us here and you on the earth plane."

How can this knowledge be turned to practical advantage?

"Only by cultivating the conditions of the higher life more persistently. It is not expedient that you should ignore your earthly duties, but with due attention to them give more thought to the relation in which you stand spiritually to the higher state of existence. In fact, ever remember that you are passing onward, and are hourly leaving the material things behind; and that those which remain and continue with you are the spiritual facts of your being, and that there will come a day when you will find that all the conditions of being are resolved into the spiritual, and that the conditions of earth-life have ceased to affect you. You must await this change with patience. We would say, live in the daily expectation of this change which cometh at the appointed time. Life on earth hath its measure of duty; fulfil your appointed tasks; take them as they arise, and never tire of bestowing that attention upon them which is the secret of a successful and happy life. You ask for the sympathy of your dear friends who have passed before you to spirit-land, the best and most certain way to secure that will be to live your best in view of the removal referred to. There are present with you the friends you seek, friends whom you will meet when you cross the border. A life well spent will enable you to bring with you, when you come to them, such an introduction as shall enhance the pleasure of meeting. Verily, you may rejoice in such a prospect; for us, we await your coming with the assurance, that in that day our hearts will be glad. Press on, all strength is thine."

H. J. B.

September, 1878.

To Correspondents.

Communications for insertion in this Journal should be plainly written, and as concise as possible.

Several poetical contributions held over for want of space.

THE HISTORY OF MOSES.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—No reply has yet appeared from the pen of "A.R." to my letter of last month, but I see in the *Spectator* and *Methodist Chronicle* of 9th instant, the report of a supremely interesting address delivered by Professor Max Muller, on "The Origin and Growth of Religion," as illustrated by the sacred literature of India. Although freethought may be freely proclaimed in an atmosphere of freedom, I shall confine myself at present to that which Moses himself assigns his people in the first two books of the Bible.

Let us see, then, what the Hebrew legislator must have been. From this inquiry will result proofs as convincing as possible to give, after a lapse of near four thousand years, or an epoch which fables and legends of all kinds have contributed not a little to envelop in clouds and obscurity. According to Moses himself, the Hebrews having multiplied to such extent as to form a nation within a nation, and seriously to alarm Pharaoh, who then reigned, he sought by every means in his power to destroy them, notably by ordering the destruction at birth of all male infants; a poor woman unable to suffer the death of her infant before her eyes, prefered exposing him in a willow basket on the Nile. The daughter of Pharaoh, who had come to the river-side with her attendants to bathe, perceived the infant, and touched with pity, saved his life, had him conveyed to her palace, adopted him as her son.

This infant was Moses, brought up at the the court of the Kings of Egypt, even to the age of forty years, without ever being informed of his origin, one fine day was constrained to fly to the desert for killing an Egyptian who was maltreating a Hebrew, and it was there that God, it is said, came to reveal to him his destined mission.

I ask, even of the most prepossessed, if it is not natural and logical to conclude, that Moses, brought up by the priests, was initiated by them in the pure worship and learning of the higher classes and that thence came his enlightenment? And afterwards, when expelled from the palace of Pharaoh, whether from the exposure of his origin which had been concealed by the princess who loved him, or, as he himself tells us for having killed an Egyptian, would not resentment and the desire of vengeance have urged him to seek the means of emancipating the race from which he was descended?

Taking advantage, then, of one of those terrible famines which ravage Egypt on failure of the fertilizing inundations of the Nile, or of one of those destroying scourges of plague or typhus, which are not rare in those countries, he presented himself before the reigning prince as a celestial messenger, and, attributing those afflictions to divine wrath, succeeded in extorting from him permission to withdraw the Hebrews from their unhappy lot.

I would rather incline, however, to consider the revolt and flight of the Hebrews as a revolution, long prepared by Moses and his brother Aaron, who seconded all his projects, and which the Egyptians did not percieve until too late to repress it.

As to the destruction of Pharaoh and his whole army in the waters of the Red Sea, I consign it, together with the passage of the fugitives dry-shod through the sea, to the apocryphal domain of miracle and invention, We can imagine that Moses, who wrote these things. after the fact, having described himself as a messenger of God, desired to surround them with a mysterious halo, very favourable withal, to the accomplishment of his mission.

It was by the supernatural and wonderful that all his predecessors had imposed themselves upon the rude and superstitious masses; and like the clever man he was,

his aim was to invest his power with a divine prestige, that it might be less questioned. Certainly it would not be an easy task to conduct through deserts, in search of fertile soil to receive and nourish them, these undisciplined hordes, who, slaves yesterday, free to-day, would submit with difficulty, to any new control imposed upon them.

The desert was immense, where to go nobody knew, and Moses, no more than others. A programme, however, was necessary to appease the murmurs which daily became more menacing. "We are going to conquer the promised land" proclaimed Moses, and they continued their march. Days, months, years pass away, and the wandering horde is still unable to escape from the sands. Now they go forward, stamping the earth with rage, then they retrace their steps; the outcasts become weary, they regret the land of Egypt, and blaspheme the God of whom Moses had made himself the interpreter. They remember the Ox Apis, which they had formerly seen carried in procession by the priests, with song and dance; they make one, of gold or of brass, with the bracelets of the women and the buckles of the men, and they worship it, beseeching it to put an end to the sufferings they had no longer the courage to endure.

And Moses was invisible, alone in his tent; perhaps he too, was in despair. All at once, at the decline of the day, the heavens became darkened, lightnings flash through space, and the thunder's voice resounds. It was the moment to act. The multitude heard with terror the manifestations of those physical phenomena which they could not understand. Promptly the chief appeared, his face expressive of inspiration; even before he had spoken respect and submission were restored; he broke the idols, and with a trumpet voice announced, that the wrath of heaven to punish their murmurs and their little faith, condemned them still to wander, before reaching the country of their hopes. And they continued to wander. It was time gained. They came at last to a mountain-top from which they perceived vast plains covered with verdure. It was time; worn out with strife and fatigue, arrived at the term of his existence Moses could but cry aloud, "Behold the land to which the Lord commanded me to lead you!" He stretched out his arms as if to take possession—and he died, leaving to his brother and to the faithful whom he had prepared the duty of completing his work.

During his long wanderings he had written a book of the law, in which, assigning a fabulous past to his people of yesterday, and inspired by the traditions and sacred books he had studied in Egypt, he revives the Hindoo legends on God and creation, institutes priests or Levites, prescribes sacrifices and their manner, and, in a few civil and religious laws, lays the foundation of the new society which his successors were about to construct. It is thus that, stripped of prodigy and fable, rejecting above all, the unworthy role assigned by Moses to the Divinity for the success of his projects, I admit the historic tradition of the flight of the Hebrews, and of their arrival in the country they were to conquer. Is not that, moreover, the very simple legend that might apply to all antique emigrations to the cradle of all ancient civilizations? Everywhere you find a legislator, a man who claims to be sent from God, and who succeeds in uniting and controlling the masses by the double prestige of his genius and self attributed origin. Thus did Manou, Buddha, and Zoroaster impose their authority and establish their missions.

Will it be said that I substitute fable for fable? No for I do but take the most salient points of Hebrew history, which alone, as appears to me, ought to be considered authentic, repudiating only the mysterious and the revealed, as I repudiate it in India, in Egypt, in Persia, in Greece and at Rome; claiming no right to admit the poetic and sacred legends of one, and to reject those of another. What constitutes the unimpeachable force of my reasoning is this unity of all the first founders of nations, basing their ascendancy on the religious idea; which, it must be admitted, is that which takes firmest hold of the naive intelligence of primitive peoples. Each attributes to God his book of the law—each legislates for religious as well as for civil life. All divide the people into castes, and proclaim the superiority of the priest. Lastly, all, whether first claiming incarnation, or simple mission from God, are careful to envelope their death as well as their birth, in mystery. India is ignorant what was the end of Manou. Zoroaster was carried off by a ray of the sun. China and Japan translate Buddha to heaven. And Moses, conveyed by an angel to the valley of Moab, disappeared from the eyes of his people, who knew not in what corner of the earth reposed his remains; and the belief prevails that he returned to God who sent him.

This is all that sound reason can say about Moses. I have said that the role attributed to God by this legislator was unworthy of the majesty and grandeur of the Supreme Being. A truth which will be sufficiently established by reading the titles of chapters 7 to 12 of the book of Exodus.

Yours, &c.,

LAYMAN.

Vaughan, August 14, 1878.

BIBLICAL DIFFICULTIES.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—In the present letter I shall endeavour to compass three of Dr. Faunce's chapters, namely those which deal with difficulties derived from Geology, Astronomy, and History. In connection with the geological difficulties our author confines himself to the first chapter of Genesis. which he seeks to persuade his readers is not in conflict with the testimony of the "old stone book." In viewing this section of the rev. author's work, I must complain of the disingenuous subterfuges to which he, in common with the majority of biblical apologists, resorts. Instead of taking the words of scripture in their most obvious and natural sense, these defenders of the faith adopt interpretations which, whilst evincing some ingenuity, are scarcely compatible with candor and unbias. Dr. F. fortifies himself with two positions. The first which is that of Page, Smith, Baylee, Pratt and others is that in the first and second verses of Genesis we have an account of a creation that preceded by immense ages the acts recorded in the third and following verses; that in the prior period the strata of the earth with their fossilized deposits were founded; and that the present creation, known as "the six days' work," occurred in our Quarternary period. Thus he partly allows the antiquity claimed by scientists for the earth and its fossilized deposits. He says "what millions of centuries were passed in chaos before the world was finally fitted up for this race of ours in the last six days' work, no man can ever know; for God has nowhere told us." Now, to say nothing of the violence which such an interpretation does to the scripture, for the text (Genesis I, 1-3) presents to an unprejudiced reader a *continuous narrative*, and not *detached statements*,—it is most unscientific,* and has been abandoned as untenable by reputable geologists; amongst them Hugh Miller, who at first strenuously upheld the theory. Dr. Faunce's second position is that which Hugh Miller latterly adopted. Dr. F. thus expresses it "* * * on six successive week days followed by a Sabbath * * * on these literal days God may have allowed the vision of those vast day-periods, in the great characteristics of each, to pass before the mind of Moses." (p. 150.) Just fancy it! God turning showman and working thaumaturgic prodigies for the instruction and amusement of His solitary pupil and spectator, to so little purpose that Moses actually supposed the work of myriads of years—"vast day-periods"—to have been accomplished in six literal days! That Moses used the "day" in its literal sense is evident from the fact that each day is represented as having its "morning" and "evening," and that God's cessation from creative labor is the basis of the fourth commandment.

Numerous valid objections might be urged against our author's positions, and I wish I had time to expose his assumptions, but other matters press and I can pause merely to record his admissions. He says (p. 145) the methods of "science and revelation are exactly opposite. Compare them at any point, until the problem is solved,

* Where has a *chaos*, such as this implies, ever been found.

and they may not *agree*. But in the end, when the grand result is reached—*as it is not yet*—the two methods" will strictly harmonize; and (p. 162) "the order of the scientists is in outline—*we could not expect agreement in detail*,† for science is not yet perfect—is in outline that of revelation." This is exquisite. May we all have patience to await "the end," when 'the grand result is reached," when infantile science shall have become so matured, so "perfected" as to be in detailed harmony with Mosaic "revelation!"

Let us now follow Dr. Faunce into his treatment of "Difficulties from Astronomy." It gives me much pleasure to cordially agree with him when he eloquently combats the objection that because God is so great and powerful, as revealed in worlds, suns, and systems, therefore he will have no interest in the small matters that pertain to human life." Dr. F. shows that the Almighty is the God of the *microscope* as well as of the *telescope*, and that he "who wheels his throne upon the rolling worlds" also "gives its lustre to the insect's wing." So far, I agree with him; it is only when he proceeds to draw certain inferences that I enter a protest. Says Dr. F., "Grant me this only, that the worlds of the midnight sky were not made in sport, that their maker, God, desired to reveal himself in these, that only a part of his nature could be enshrined in them, while he himself could be enshrined in man, his image,—and the inference is clear that he may, that he probably will, come among us as Immanuel." Yes, but who is going to admit that God himself *could* be wholly enshrined in man? Again Dr. F. says "Shall God reveal his thought in the stars, and shall he refrain from revealing it in man's thought, *i e.*, the literature of the world." And from this he argues the necessity of a Divine Book, the Bible. But, in the case of the stars, is God *special* or is He *general*? Does he reveal his thought in Jupiter and not in Saturn? Does he favour Uranus and neglect Neptune? If not; if he has no favourites in the planetary world, why should he be partial in the human or the literary world? Why favour Jesus and not Emerson? Why declare his will in the Bible, and not in the Vedas?—I am, &c.,

VOX VERITATIS.

SOME ABSURDITIES OF HOLY WRIT.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—When we, as humble seekers after truth, ask the so-called orthodox clergy, if the "Five Books of Moses"—the Pentateuch—were written by Moses himself, the reply is, "most certainly they were, by the inspiration of God." To ascertain this, let us put them to an analytical test in accordance with reason, the greatest blessing that the One True God (not the Jewish Jahveh, or as euphonised Jehovhah—that magnified image of themselves, their Oriental sheik above the skies) has graciously conferred upon us. In Exodus 16th chap. 35th verse, Moses speaks of the miraculous food, manna, disappearing after the Jews entered Canaan, but how could Moses record this *after his death?* Again in, Genesis, 14th chap. 14th verse, and 22nd chap. 28th verse, and Deut. 34th chap. 1st verse, Moses speaks of such places as Dan, Hebron, Gilgal, &c., which places were not named by the Jews until *after* the conquest of Canaan, he (Moses) being then dead! Again, in Genesis 26th chap. 31st verse, he speaks of the regal government of the Jews, when, at the same time, the *first* Hebrew king, Saul, did not ascend the throne for upwards of 300 years after the time of Moses! But the greatest absurdity of all is, that Moses, in the last chapter of Deutronomy, gives an account of *his own* death and burial! What a fatal blow it is to the God-head of Jesus that he should have thought that the Pentateuch was written by Moses. As far as divine worship is concerned, the virgin and child in a few centuries will be as dead as is now the divine Isis with her offspring, the infant god Horus.

XENOPHANES.

Lachlan District, New South Wales.

† For detailed divergencies between Genesis and science let me refer to a series of papers on the Mosaic Sabbath, published in the first five numbers of the *Harbinger* for 1877.

CLARKISM UNVEILED.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

Dear Sir,—Before me *lies* a small pamphlet bearing the classic title of "Spiritism Unveiled," by W. W. Clarke, M.D.* Will you allow me space to "unveil" Mr. Clarke?

In the first place I would call attention to his *plagiarisms*. The critical reader will probably discern in Mr. Clarke's introductory remarks a striking resemblance to some of the phrases and forms of expression to be found on pp. 4 and 5 of Mrs. E. H. Britten's *Electric Physician* (published in 1875); but, passing that by, let us observe the following:—"Spiritualism, we repeat, is the work of evil beings, free from the trammels of the flesh, and possessed of immense power and opportunities, whose object it is to undermine Christianity and all true religion, and ruin men's souls." (Clarke's pamphlet p 5.) Now compare that with Professor Crookes's Summary of Theories (*Researches in Phen.*, p. 103), where describing the fifth theory he says, "The actions of evil spirits or devils, personifying who or what they please, in order to undermine Christianity and ruin men's souls." On p. 6, Mr. Clarke says, "The political aspect of Spiritualism is an important one, and on next page he continues, "It would almost seem that the demons have been laying plans for the government of the world through their mediums." These are almost the *ipsissima verba* of Elder Miles Grant in his work (a title similar to Mr. C's) called *Spiritualism Unveiled*, p. 66, where he remarks, "The political aspect of Spiritualism is an important item, It is very evident that for some years past the demons have been laying plans to control the government of this world through their mediums." In the year 1872, a Rev. John Gregory, of Northfield, Vermont, published an "Exposé of Spiritualism," in which, speaking of Professor William Denton's creed, he says, "His God is Abner Kneeland's God of Nature. . . . Senseless matter, the principle of life that is manifested in the flowing river, in the transparent air, and in vegetation." (Quoted by Allen Putnum, "Tipping his Tables," p. 40.) Now observe what Mr. Clarke says, p. 7, "Take William Denton for instance, whose God is Nature, the living principle that is unfolded in senseless matter, in air, and cloud and vegetation." On p. 10, Mr. Clarke speaks of the weltering chaos of Pantheism," using the expression as if it was his own. But in "Essays for the Times" by Dr. J. H. Rigg, author of Modern Anglican Theology, I read, "Thus has human speculation on this subject, in seeking to wing its way from the earthly region of sense and matter of-fact to the empyrean of ultimate truth and of original causes, ever fallen down ingloriously into the weltering chaos of Pantheism." (p. 351.) Again, Mr. Clarke's furious assertion (p. 12) that "the leading Spiritists are free-lovers and *vice versa*," is simply an improvement upon the Rev. Dr. Baldwin's statement, so trenchantly reviewed by J. M. Peebles in "Witch Poison," that "the leading free-lovers are Spiritists."

And finally, on his last page, wondering why Spirit-intercourse had not been revealed before if there was anything divine about it, Mr. Clarke thus concludes:—"But we know there is no such necessity. All God's works are complete. In the Bible we possess all the knowledge we need. It teaches us all we require to know regarding a future life. From its inspired pages, individuals can learn how to live and how to die; societies can learn how to attain the highest culture and happiness; and nations can learn how to become established in righteousness and founded on truth." Now read the following from the Boston *Congregationalist*† for July, 1853, "There is no need of any of these spiritual manifestations. Men can learn to live well and die well; communities may learn to reach the highest level of refinement and happiness, and become established in righteousness by simply following the light the Bible gives them. . . . God works no deeds of superogation." Mr. Clarke has accused A. J. Davis of plagiarism. In

* Just published by T. Smith, Fitzroy.

† Since writing the above I have seen A. E. Newton's "Ministry of Angels," wherein this extract from the *Congregationalist* is given in full, p. 64.

his own case, however, these resemblances are, of course, only "curious coincidences!" I must now draw to a close, reserving some further "unveiling" for another time. Before I conclude, however, just let me notice an astounding piece of misquotation, or rather literary garbling. Dr. S. Brittan is quoted (p. 6) as saying that the facts and principles of Spiritualism "are destined to pulverise all systems and institutions." Mr. Clarke carefully leaves out the words, "that are at war with Nature, Reason, and Science." (See Brittan's "Rational Spiritualism, pp. 17-18). But enough for the present. A few delectable *et ceteras* I reserve for another opportunity. Yours, &c.,

E. LEONARD.

INTERESTING LETTER FROM DR. J. M. PEEBLES.

DEAR MR. TERRY,—Snugly at home, surrounded by family, friends, and a rather extensive library, I stretch my arm halfway round the globe and clasping your hand shake it cordially. How do you do, faithful co-worker? and how are all the sowers, tillers, and toilers in the Spiritualistic fields of Melbourne, Sydney, New Zealand, and other isles of the ocean? Are their lamps trimmed and burning? and is Zion wearing her beautiful garments?

If embodied souls could travel as do thoughts, I should daily drop down into your midst. As it is I often come to you and others in sunny dreams, and precious memories. Will it not be glorious, when laying down the staff and putting aside the bundle of mortality, we can traverse the spaces as minds now cross the seas and oceans. If my firmness is large, my memory is tenacious. Never do I forget my friends.

Saying nothing of the good and timely letters from *you*, Mr. Stanford, Mr. Deakin, and Mr. Wilson, I have received excellent letters from Miss Ricketts, Miss Donnelly, Alice, Ernest, Peter, Robert, Charlie, Willie, and others. Some of these contained photographs, and others spirit communications, for all of which a thousand thanks are returned.

"Jack," a sailor youth in spirit-life, promised through the organism of Peter F. Sterling, before my leaving Melbourne, that he would see me safely home; he kept his word. I grew stout upon the ocean, never losing a meal during the roughest gales that swept o'er the wide seas. Often did I sense the presence of this sailor, and the Indian Spirit, Powhattan; while more ancient spirits directed me mentally, when traversing the cinnamon-fields of Ceylon, and the soma-shingled mountains of India. This was what was meant by "Give us this day our daily bread."

Richly did I enjoy my travels and observations in South-eastern Africa among the Zulus, Kaffirs, Bushmen, and other wild tribes of Africa. In Natal I delivered the first lecture ever given upon Spiritualism. The mayor of the city took the chair. The discourse created a good deal of discussion in the two daily newspapers. Bishop Colenso has opened the way in this colony for freethought and for Spiritualism.

Pleasant were the five weeks that I spent in Cape Town, South Africa. The climate here is healthy, the scenery magnificent, the citizens cordial, the Spiritualists few. A letter received from there to-day, informs me that the colony is at war with natives, taxes high, and times are hard. On our way from the Cape to England, we stopped at St. Helena, once the prison-home of Napoleon. The isle is rough and rocky—fitting place to subdue ambition.

It was my intention when reaching London to remain but two weeks, and I remained four months, lecturing each sunday, and often two or three times during the week. Ten years ago, I visited London for the first time. The change since that time, relative to the progress of Spiritualism, is wonderful. Frequently did I see A. R. Wallace, William Crookes, "M.A." of the Oxford University, and other distinguished scientists and *savans* who openly avow their Spiritualism. Such moral courage is highly commendable. Both the Spiritual Institution and British National Association gave me a most encouraging reception—and public *soirees* upon my leaving. I have in my soul only kind thoughts and blessings for the Spiritualists of London. They desire me to settle there and become their permanent speaker. Not as I but as the angels will. There is a Divinity that overrules all things. It is my aim to do the will of the Father, under the inspiration of mediating angels and ministering spirits.

Sailing from Liverpool on the last day of April, nine days thereafter found me in St. John's Newfoundland, thence to Halifax, and thence to Boston, U.S.A. Here, I was under my native flag. Boston! the head-centre of Unitarianism and Spiritualism! Previous to reaching this city, and while I was lecturing in New Brunswick, the following correspondence took place:—

Banner of Light Publishing House,
9 Montgomery Place, Boston, Mass.,
May 22nd, 1878.

Dr. James M. Peebles.

Dear Sir,—Having followed with interest and pleasure the course of your recent wanderings around the globe, and being impressed with a lively sense of the good which your labours have accomplished for Spiritualism in the the far-off lands whither your steps have been directed, it is with the deepest gratification that we receive the intelligence that you have once more returned in safety to this continent and to the scenes of your native country.

Desirous of of affording an opportunity to the friends in Boston to enjoy with us the happy privilege of welcoming you to this city, we propose an informal reception for that purpose, to be held in the *Banner of Light* Publishing House, as soon as it may suit your convenience after your arrival in our midst.

Trusting that our proposition will meet with your approbation, we remain, Fraternally yours,

COLBY & RICH.

To Dr. J. M. Peebles, St. John, N.B.

Messrs. Colby & Rich, *Banner of Light* Publishing Office Boston.

Gentlemen,—In reply to your kind favour of May 22, I have to say that it will afford me much pleasure to be present at the "informal reception" you propose to tender me when reaching Boston.

That clever German, Ulrich, is reported to have said that a man ought to live through his life once to know how to live it. And so a man ought to once circumnavigate the globe to know how to do it. This my last voyage has been, ethnologically speaking, more profitable, and I may add far more interesting every way than the previous one; for, while widening the sphere of acquaintances and reviving many old friendships in Australia and India, I saw other countries—other races and tribes, and formed many new acquaintances in Ceylon, in the (India) Madras Presidency, in Madagascar, in Natal and Cape Town, South Africa. In these, as in other places less known to history, I made it a point to disseminate the heavenly principles of the spiritual philosophy. My field of labour is the world; and all around this world, made so beautiful by the Infinite Father, I find, whether among reputed "heathen" or Christian, whether among civilised or savage, royal souls, genial natures, and sufficient of sympathy to reveal the divinity of humanity.

I repeat it will afford me pleasure to meet you—veterans in the cause of Spiritualism—and other fellow-workers whose acquaintance and confidence I have shared for many years. Very truly yours,

St. Johns, New Brunswick. J. M. PEEBLES.

Mrs. Peebles, leaving her aged and invalid mother in Hammonton, came on to Boston to meet me and enjoy the reception. This took place the next day after my arrival. The weather was the finest of the season. The hall was tastefully draped and festooned with flags, banners, mottoes &c., by the Conductor of the Children's Progressive Lyceum. The room was crowded with ladies and gentlemen; an original song of welcome was sung; an original poem by Mr. Day, assistant editor of the *Banner of Light*, was read; and speeches were made by the most prominent Spiritualists of Boston. The occasion was enjoyable to enthusiasm. Among prominent persons present, taking no part in the exercises, were Mrs. Peebles, Mrs. Denton, Mrs. Farrar, Miss Chace,

Mr. Luther Colby, I. B. Rich, Epes Sargent, E. Gerry Brown, John Wetherbee, Dr. Main, Phineas E. Gay, J. B. Hatch, conductor of the Lyceum, Mr. Rudd, Dr. Goodrich, Dr. Currier and lady, L. A. Bigelow, Cephas B. Lynn, Dr. Hayward, and many others whose names I do not now recall. Dr. Gardner, who was present, was called for, but he was obliged to withdraw without speaking, as also Miss Lizzie Doten.

At present I am lecturing on Sundays in Philadelphia, a city of over 800,000—nearly a million. My Hammonton home is twenty-eight miles distant. Week-days I remain closeted in my library.

Spiritualism is just now passing through a crisis in America. It may be denominated the *weeding process.* All mediumistic tricksters and impostors are being subjected to a fiery ordeal. Crucial tests are being applied, not so much by sceptics as by Spiritualists themselves. Is it not a shame that "mediums" will pretend to be entranced when they are *not?*—Will dress up "dolls" and palm them off for spirit-children in semi-dark rooms?—Will engage in a sort of fortune-telling for money? All this class of pretenders are being relegated to their own places Judas-like.

Genuine Spiritualism, by which I mean a sound rational religious *Spiritualism*, never stood so high, neither was it ever making such rapid progress as at present. It is the crowning fact of the sunset years of the nineteenth century!

Only think! It is now but thirty years since the Rochester manifestations in America, and its armies number their millions. Spiritualist mediums, lecturers, and literature may be found not only in English speaking nations and colonies but in all enlightened countries throughout the world!

Spiritualism, like civilisation, moves like sea-waves, moves in cycles. And now another trumpet sounds—a new cycle opens! What is to be its work? What is to be the mission of Spiritualism for the next thirty years? I answer, It is not to found or establish another sect; not to build up a new external church with creed and formal ceremonies; not to adjust still harder grappling irons with which to worry retiring, sensitive mediums; not to feed a cold, demanding positivism; not to encourage a wanton curiosity in the matter of the manifestations; not to prostitute spiritual inspirations to gratify a growing selfishness; not to foster clannish combination, nor to ape the older ecclesiasticisms to gain a passing, hollow-hearted respectability; nor to wed the occult mysteries of medeival times to the clearer spiritual knowledge of the present. No, no! But affirmatively, the work of the great widening cycle into which we are this day stepping is of a most important and searching character. It is eminently personal. It is the home-work of spiritualising much of our Spiritualism. The spiritual philosophy must be lifted above the plane of gaping wonder and up out of the slough of everything that bears the slightest resemblance to any money-clutching selfishness. It must be made the synonym of mental culture, moral growth, and holy endeavour, finding its sweetest delight in the love-fellowship of the Christ-spirit. It must become a catholic, benevolent, and practical power in daily life—a warming cleansing baptism of fire; a regenerating force in the heart's affections, in the quiet home circle, in the family relation, in the State, the kingdom, the world!

The coming Spiritualist must live in the light and the liberty of manly thought, conscious integrity, and exalted life deeds. On his breast-plate must be written knowledge of immortality, consecration to the good, enthusiasm for the right, and love for universal humanity. He must combine in himself the medium, the prophet, the teacher, the healer, and the master-builder. He must seek to rightly balance in himself the physical, the intellectual, and the spiritual, and then to do the work of the hour and the day gladly. He must not content himself with the common demands of a partial amelioration, but he must go to the fountain head and strive for the prevention of evil and for the removal of all misdirection and and all moral wrong. His hands must be magnets of health, his words benedictions of peace, and his life a perpetual Sabbath of charitable thought and benevolent action.

While five is the indispensable number in mathematics seven in the more subjective region of the spiritual is the mystic, the all-important number. There were in the Revelator's visions seven lamps, seven seals, seven stars, and seven spirits proceeding from the altar; so in the dawning spiritual cycle there are seven rounds in the golden ladder of progress. Thoughtful heads and prayerful hearts must guide the feet of Spiritualists to press the most, if not all, of those rounds during the next thirty years' cycle.

The seven rounds—the seven upward and forward steps towards a more perfected spiritual life are:—

1. A correct education.
2. Moral culture and self control.
3. The practice of peace, and the dissemination of peace principles.
4. Total abstinence from stimulating and intoxicating drinks.
5. A diet of grains, vegetables, and delicious fruits.
6. Co-operation ultimating in a united inheritance.
7. Purity of life, and a consecration of the whole nature to the best interests of humanity.

Education, considered prospectively, antedates prenatal life. It begins, or should begin, as a work of preparation, with the *to-be* fathers and mothers of the future race. In the use of the inter-relational and procreative functions, theirs is a most sacred responsibility; and for the reason that ante-natal life stands related psychologically to hereditary tendencies, transmissible traits, and mental characteristics, both marked and durable.

This grave matter, though possibly pertaining more directly to the physiological than the domain of the spiritual, calls, nevertheless, for deep, patient study, and a rigid practice in social life.

It is well to have a sound and symmetrically proportioned body. The soul demands such for its manifestations. But the bare knowledge of bodily relations is not redemptive. Knowledge must be made practical, ripening up into wisdom. Science alone does not save. Many scientific men are scheming, selfish and unprincipled, The physical sciences are but segments of the circle that constitute the true education.

There may be splendid talents, transcendent genius, scientific research, wide scope of thought, and the most acute reasoning powers; yet, unless morality, virtue, integrity, purity, and truth, underlie and crown the whole, the man is not an educated man. Nothing can be clearer to the spiritually minded than that mental culture, self-control, and the strict fulfilment of all moral obligations are among the pressing duties of the day and the hour.

Spiritualist camp-meetings have become what might almost be termed yearly institutions. They continue from two to five weeks. There are lectures each day, and bands of music in attendance. Often ten and fifteen thousand are present. I am engaged as a speaker at four of these camp-meetings in the vicinity of Boston this present season.

The Boston Children's Progressive Lyceum gave me a magnificent public reception, at which I gave them a full account of the Melbourne Lyceum, its officers and members, its new Lyceum Leader, its monthly journal, and its interesting Sessions. Doubtless you are receiving great aid and encouragement in your Lyceum work from the presence of Mrs. Britten and Mr. Walker. Kind and cheering words from such able exponents of the spiritual philosophy will be of almost infinite service to the educational cause we all so much love. I am busily engaged on a new volume. It will be published late in the present autumn.

J. M. PEEBLES.

Hammonton, New Jersey, U.S.A.

[We see that Mr. Hudson Tuttle, a Spiritualist writer of considerable note in America, says in the book review column of the Chicago R. P. Journal, "that Spiritualism in Australia is twenty years behind the movement in America."

The statement quite surprises us. Will Dr. Peebles who is acquainted with the *status* of Spiritualism in all parts of the world, favour us with an opinion upon this twenty years in the rear matter?—ED. *H. of Lt.*]

RELIGIOUS BELIEF.

"When faith is virtue, reason makes it so."—Young.

The virtue and the value of religious belief, have too long been estimated by its extent and confidence, rather than by its intelligence, reasonableness and consistency. The usual course has been to believe everything furnished by testimony and enforced by authority, until proved untrue; and to no small extent we have been taught to believe in defiance of such proof. Out of the material thus provided, pliant creedists, consistent zealots, and anathematising bigots have been made. This acceptance of tenets as already sufficiently proved, however, will not meet the growing demands of the age; to satisfy them belief must have a defined, solid, and sufficient basis, one which in no case will violate objective truth, and its subjective dictates by means of our consciousness, intuitions, and rational conscientious convictions.

Belief admits of being graduated. There is positive belief, that which is irresistible, resting on our intuitive consciousness, or on demonstration. There is the belief of anything that is probable. This may more properly be called faith, to trust that what is believed is true though it is not known to be so. There is also circumstantial, or conditional belief, historic faith, faith on testimony. This, too, lacks demonstration, since the testimony, though accepted as reliable, may be false or erroneous. Of this class is most religious belief. There is moreover preferential belief, faith in things unproven from a desire they should be true. Then there is voluntary belief, that belief a man has or professes to have, in virtue of his exercise of will. This is the chief ingredient in the faith of the rigidly orthodox. Their wills are addressed and their faith through their wills, and they believe from constraint, often in violation of their convictions, amounting in many cases to a rape on conscience. The last two kinds of faith are illegitimate and indefensible; and allowing the legitimacy of that which rests on probability, it admits the obligation of seeking satisfactory proof for everything believed, and of believing nothing as absolute truth which has not received absolute demonstration. The nearer to perfection man approaches, the more will he seek demonstration, and the less will he believe on credit.

The fault of mankind in respect of religious belief, consists in believing too much rather than too little; and progress towards correctness and consistency of belief must come in the direction of believing less rather than more. We err more by credulity than by scepticism; by believing void of proof, than disbelieving in defiance of proof. No one can believe falsehood to be truth, knowing it to be falsehood; and no one can believe truth to be falsehood, knowing it to be truth. When truth is imperfectly known, and indistinctly apprehended, there cannot be the conviction of it as truth necessitating belief; and when falsehood is imperfectly known and but partially apprehended, there cannot be the conviction of it as falsehood necessitating its disbelief.

Between the possible states of belief and disbelief there may be a negative, a neutral state, which might more appropriately be termed unbelief, since belief and disbelief imply an active state of mind, in fact a state of belief in the one case that a thing is true, in the other that it is false. It is the truthfulness real or apparent of any proposition which produces belief; and the falsehood, real or apparent of any proposition, which produces disbelief. Belief and disbelief are consequently less voluntary than necessary in those who are honestly the subjects of them, and there is less merit in religious belief than is ordinarily claimed for it. Known and apprehended truth, by no effort of volition, can be believed to be falsehood; neither can known and apprehended falsehood, by any effort of volition, be believed to be truth.

Knowledge, holding so intimate a relation to the apprehension of truth as truth, and falsehood as falsehood, has in it an importance which cannot be over estimated; and ignorance, being so calculated to mislead, is an evil, and whenever wilful more or less a fault. There is no positively culpable moral evil, no fault, in the rejection of truth as falsehood, or the adoption of falsehood as truth, except when such rejec- and adoption are in opposition to proof and conviction. As a protection to individual liberty of conscience this cannot be too prominently maintained. A prejudice against truth may lead to its wilful rejection, even when it is known or suspected to be the truth; and a prejudice in favour of falsehood may lead to its espousal as truth, even when it is known or suspected to be falsehood. But properly speaking, such belief or unbelief is rather pretension.

Applying this to religious belief and disbelief, how little of each is genuine. How much more have education, association, prejudice and ignorance to do with them than knowledge, correct apprehension and honest conviction. How much more are our faiths made for us than by us; adopted than elaborated; professed than believed; trusted as true than vitally and positively known and experienced to be true. What would become of our faiths if we were to subject them to the test of our enlightened apprehension and irresistible conviction? How much would dissolve and disappear? How much would prove dust, and be wafted away? How little would remain? Profession has usurped the place of conviction; opinion the throne of truth. This opinion, too, has often been solemn treason, a preference of falsehood to truth, not its honest belief as truth. Even the profession of the truth, unless the offspring of conviction and a sincere belief of the truth, is of doubtful value. Character formed on the basis of fealty to truth and by the action of personal conviction and positive belief is one of the most pressing moral desiderata of the age. We are under obligation to possess such character, and to declare it by its objective revealment. We ought to appear before our fellow men what we appear to ourselves and in reality are. It is not required, neither is it meet, that we should exhibit our whole selves, make bare our whole moral being, and expose the nakedness of it as we face the thoroughfares of life; but the parts it is right and decent should go unclad should so appear; the countenance at least should be unmasked, the hands unmittened.

Truth, apprehended, believed, acknowledged, acted out, is, or should be the sum of true religion, both in theory and practice. For the attainment of this the legitimate agencies are the consciousness and conviction, personal and independent, of our own minds and not the authority, persuasion, constraint, or opinions of others living or dead, whatever their claims or pretensions. All must be, and are ultimately bound to fall back on intuition, reason and conscience, as the supreme and final appeal. Even admitting the authority of authority, we must submit its claim to truthfulness to the test of evidence. It is as impossible to believe merely on authority, apart from conviction of the truthfulness of the authority, as it is to believe the truth of what the authority testifies apart from a conviction of its truth. True belief of the truth can only come of thorough conviction; and thorough conviction can only come of intelligent apprehension. When the truth or falsehood of any statement is self evident, and conviction forces itself on us irrespective of any process of reflection, such conviction may be termed intuition. When it results from protracted thought, it is the conviction of deduction.

Uuwelcome, unpalatable truth may be shunned, denied and opposed as error; it cannot be disproved, nor suppressed. There is nothing meets such determined resistance as incontrovertible, disagreable truth; and with many, the less a truth is open to dispute, and the more it defies disbelief, the more violently it is contradicted and abjured. Of this description is the antagonism of wicked men to a sound, pure morality. But there are no opponents of truth equal to its merely professional, its false friends, those who cannot or will not appreciate and submit to it. Truth is a high, honourable, right royal thing. There is nothing more divine. The more we have of truth, the more we have of the divine. The holiest and noblest duty we can discharge is to serve truth. Error, where involuntary, is always to be pitied, and often to be excused; but where it is the result of wilfulness and resisted convic-

tion, it is blameable, and the conscience of the subject of it cannot but tell him so, for conscience, by nature, operates in the direction and on the side of truth and right, and not falsehood and wrong. This aspect of our subject is one of great practical importance. Most of our so called belief is only persuasion; that is, we persuade ourselves, or are persuaded by others, to trust the objects of it are true, but we are not thoroughly satisfied they are so.

Lady Byron, in a letter to Harriet Beecher Stowe, given in Mrs. Stowe's "History of the Byron Controversy," says:—"Doubts have arisen in the minds of many who are unhappily bound by subscription *not* to doubt; and in consequence they are habitually pretending either to believe or to disbelieve. The state of Denmark cannot but be rotten, when to *seem* is the first object of the witnesses of truth." Elsewhere, in the same letter, she observes:—"I look upon creeds of all kinds as chains—far worse chains than those you would break—as the causes of much hypocrisy and infidelity. I hold it to be a sin to *make* a child say, 'I believe.' Lead it to utter that belief spontaneously." What we should take care of is, not to accept anything merely on the ground of testimony, and only to assent as the evidence shall convince our judgments. Even when we do assent, in all matters of conviction on evidence, or a balance of judgment in favour of presumed probabilities, charity demands of each of us the admission, I may be wrong.

It is customary, when taking the census of population, for the schedule employed to contain a column for the declaration of religious belief. In the last I filled up I stated myself to be—"A believer—not on authority but conviction—in all truth, moral, scientific, and circumstantial." Man has equal right to disbelieve as to believe, since he is bound not only to abide by the objective but also by the subjective dominion of truth, that is, its interpretation by his own conscience. This is the sole position recognising our varying and erroneous beliefs, not only to truth, to God and to ourselves but to one another. Truth is immortal, unalterable, irrevocable and finally irresistible. The friends and champions of truth may therefore take heart in the midst of all their discouragements, for there is no pleasure like that arrising from the victories of truth within us and around us. What then will be the pleasure of its ultimate universal triumph?

This subjet brings with it one of the great obstacles to a complete and cordial acceptance of Spiritism. Spiritism asks belief in things which have not been proved, at least not to those whose belief is sought, and the proof of which it is not in the power of the many to command. I cannot command spirits; but I am asked to believe that others can, and also what they teach in virtue of their doing so. Spiritism asks this belief on testimony, a testimony declared to rest on proof experienced by those who give the testimony, but which testimony and proof, I am at liberty and have the right to challenge, and, if found unsatisfactory, to reject. That Spiritism stands equally well in this respect with other religions is no satisfaction; and what makes this point tell the more against Spiritism is, that Spiritists do not accept other religions on the ground of their testimony.

There is a tendency in all religions resting on professed supernatural or superhuman phenomena to resolve themselves into dependence on testimony as the proof of their claims; to ask for hypothesis the belief which is due only to demonstration; and to present as certainties propositions which, at best, are but probabilities, and at times scarcely possibilities. It is so with Spiritism, and may be expected to become more so. Then seances will be less an agency for the propagation of Spiritism, and dogmatism on the basis of what is assumed to have been proved by seances, will become increasingly the prime agency, and it may probably ultimately become the sole agency of spiritualistic discipleship. Already Spiritism properly addresses itself almost exclusively to our faith in testimony, not to our experience of its phenomena, and our conviction of their verity, and of the necessity of the deductions drawn from them

In order to a satisfactory belief in Spiritism three things at least are requisite. First—The phenomena must be real. Second—Such phenomena must be the production of Spirit agency. Third—These phenomena must be within general control, not confined to the few; so that belief therein may rest on direct personal evidence, not evidence second hand. If it be admitted that the phenomena of Spiritism are real, this admission does not necessarily carry with it the belief that such phenomena are caused by spirit agency. The fact cannot be too prominently and too constantly kept in view, that a belief in the phenomena termed spiritualistic and a belief in spirit agency as the cause of the phenomena, are altogether distinct questions, and that a belief in the phenomena by no means involves a belief that the agency producing the phenomena is spirit agency. The objection to the claim of Spiritism to spirit agency as the cause of its phenomena, is not to be disposed of by the retort, that those who do not believe that the phenomena are so produced, are bound to show by what other agency they are produced. The burden of proof rests with the Spiritists. If they affirm that certain phenomena are caused by spirit agency, and ask belief to that effect, they are bound to show that the phenomena are so caused, and not in any other way. In view of all the evidence available, my belief is, that whatever the cause of so-callled spiritualistic phenomena it is "not proven" that they are caused by the agency of spirits. E. F HUGHES.

GENERAL MEETING OF THE VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

The general meeting of the Victorian Association of Spiritualists was held at the Masonic Hall, on Thursday, September 12th, 1878, Mr. A Deakin in the chair.

The chairman opened the proceedings by announcing that the primary object of the meeting was to elect officers and committee in place of those whose term had expired. He regretted the absence of so many members, but was pleased to see the number of strangers present whom he invited to join the Association before the commencement of the business. In response sixteen new members were enrolled.

The following officers were then elected:—President, Mr. Deakin; Vice-Presidents, Messrs. W. B. Bowley, T. W. Stanford, G. A. Stow; Secretary, Mr. A. van Ryn van Alkemade; Treasurer, Mr. W. H. Terry. A resolution to increase the committee to fifteen members was carried unanimously, and the following gentlemen elected:—Messrs. Thos. Lang, E. Purton, S. G. Watson, A. Hall, J. G. Hoogklimmer, Syme, H. Moore, D. Clay, Adkins, J. Ross, McLaughlin, and Mesdames Minchen, Cassell, Syme and Armstrong. Auditors, Messrs. Lang and Stow.

The chairman impressed upon those present the necessity for both individual and concerted action for the increase of the Association, in both members and friends, in order that we might not only be able to bring prominently forward the teachings and facts of Spiritualism, but at the same time steadily accumulate a fund for the erection of a building for Spiritualistic purposes. With this in view, he suggested that in future the Association should engage lecturers at a fixed sum, and, by working the lectures energetically and economically, fulfilling the duties that ordinarily were performed by paid agents, and thereby participating in the profits without injuring the lecturer.

Various projects were proposed for increasing the usefulness of the Association, and a resolution passed to invite Mr. Thos. Walker to deliver a course of lectures in Melbourne. The meeting then adjourned.

THE WALKER AND GREEN DISCUSSION.

For several months past I have been annoyed by the reception of numerous letters and enquiries in reference to the above book, under the assumption that it is in my hands. I beg to inform those interested that the printing was placed in other hands, and I have nothing more to do with the book than to sell copies when I can get them. I was informed last month that the sheets were all printed, but not bound. Should any reach me before next issue I will give notice therein.—W. H. Terry.

ANCIENT FAITHS.

Continued.

The Sanscrit language is believed to be the most ancient language in the world, but it is not known when or where it was spoken. The Brahmins teach that it was used in the Garden of Eden, which, according to their traditions, as well as those of the Persians, was in the island of Ceylon, where there is a mountain known as Adam's Peak which *bears his name till this day.* All the Asiatic faiths record their laws in Sanscrit. It is a beautiful and very copious language, and contains much literature, poetry and science, while its words are traceable through all the Asiatic and European languages. No other language resembles it so much as the Hebrew which is looked upon by the Brahmins *as a meagre idiom of Sanscrit.* A great similarity may be perceived by our readers from the following words: "Brahma" (the Universal Father) compared with "Abram," "Yahovah" and "Jehovah," "Trimarti" with "Trinity," "Christnu" with "Christ." A great similarity is also discernible in the religions: Christnu is represented as having been a Divine incarnation who died in atonement for the sins of the world, and as there is a large stone sculpture of the Trinity, with three heads, in one of the caves of Elephantus, which were visited by Alexander the Great more than 300 years before the birth of Christ, and as there is no evidence that Bengal was ever converted to Christianity, there can be no doubt which was the original. Let us now contrast the teachings and practice of Moses with that of one of the old faiths, that taught by Zoroaster, who lived twenty-six years after the death of Joshua, when most of the promised land was still in the possession of its original inhabitants, and the laws of Moses in full operation against them; compare the two together and judge them by their fruit. Mark the conduct of Israel to the Midianites—"They slew all the males, burned all their cities, and took all the prey and the spoil;" "Slew all the males among the little ones, and every woman who had known man," those who had not "they kept alive for themselves."—Numbers, xxxi, 1-18, 40-44. As to the 32,000 women-children who were spared by the Israelites on that occasion, after slaughtering their parents, these were divided according to the law into three classes. The captors were at liberty to marry their captives, after which, "If they found no delight in them," they were to let them go. Nothing was said about their children. Hagar was allowed to take her son Ishmael, and this may indicate the law; the Jews also put away their Gentile wives on their return from the Babylonish captivity, doubtless many to perish with their offspring!—Deut. xxi, 10-14, and Ezra x, 10-11. The second class were such as they retained as servants and slaves, of whom we read, "If a man smite his servant or his maid with a rod that she die under it, he shall surely be punished: Notwithstanding, if she continue for a day or two he shall not be punished *for she is his money.*"—Exod., xx. 20-21, Lev. xxv, 44-46, Deut. xx, 10-16. There was also a third class, those who were devoted "as a heave offering to the Lord," of whom we read, "The Lord's heave offering was thirty and two persons, and Moses gave the tribute which was the Lord's heave offering unto Eleazar, the priest." According to the law, "All the heave offerings of holy things which the children of Israel offer to the Lord, have I given unto thee (Aaron) and thy sons and thy daughters by a statute for ever." Do our readers ask what became of the female children which were offered to the Lord as a heave offering? The law concerning the heave offering is, "Everything that openeth the matrix of all flesh which they shall bring unto the Lord, the first-born of man thou shalt redeem. None devoted, which shall be devoted of men, shall be redeemed, but shall surely be put to death." Or, according to the Septuagent, "Whatever shall be dedicated of men shall not be ransomed, but shall surely be put to death."—Lev., xxii, 28-29. Respecting the heave offerings we read, "And this is thine (the high-priest's) the heave offerings and their gifts with all the wave offerings of the children of Israel, I have given them unto thee; every one that is clean in thy house shall eat of it."*

The command given by Moses concerning the inhabitants of the land was, "Thou shalt smite them utterly and destroy them, thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor show mercy unto them."†

What a striking contrast this forms with the teaching of Jesus who taught, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, that you may be the children of your Father which is in heaven. Be merciful as your Father which is heaven is merciful." "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "Kill every male among the little ones," said Moses; "Suffer little children to come unto me (said Jesus) and forbid them not for of such is the kingdom of heaven." When will men learn to use the reason God hath given them, and learn to distinguish between truth and falsehood—honouring and blaspheming God? The teaching of Moses and of Jesus are incompatible with each other. Reader, use your judgment—both cannot be true!

How very different was the conduct of the three Persian monarchs toward their captives after the conquest of Babylon. They were disciples of Zoroaster.

The New Testament informs us that God, "who no man hath seen or can see, who changeth not, who dwelleth not in temples made with hands, so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son" up to death that they might live through him! Can these statements be reconciled with the writings and conduct of Moses? Who, think you, *did the will of God,* Moses and the Jews who offered to the Lord, *for a wave offering* of the spoils of their neighbours, with *thirty and two female orphans,* or those three Persian monarchs, whom the Jews counted heathen, who returned to them 5,000 vessels of gold and silver, restored them from captivity to their own land, and enabled them to rebuild their city and their sanctuary. The disciples of Moses, with their luxuriant priesthood and gorgeous temple, or the children of Zoroaster, who had neither priests, altars, or sacrifices, and no temple but the arch of heaven, but who feared God, and loved their enemies? Ye shall know them by their fruit!

* Num., xviii, 8-13.

† Deut., vii, 2.

MRS. E. H. BRITTEN.

Mrs. Britten concluded the most successful course of lectures ever given in Victoria, at the Opera House, on Sunday Sep. 8th., her subject being the "Church of the Future." In it she briefly described the religions of the past, analyzed those of the present, shewing their unsoundness and inadaptibility to man's requirements, and foreshadowed the universality of the spiritual religion in the church of the future. Her oration was listened to with the profoundest attention by an immense audience who crowded the building in every part. By request she recited the fine poem "Over There" in place of the usual questions, and at its conclusion was greeted with hearty applause. On the following day Mrs. Britten accompanied by Mr. Britten, left town for Benalla, *en route* to Sydney, where she is to give a course of lectures. The lecture given by Mrs. Britten at the Town Hall on the 3rd ult, in aid of the Melbourne Hospital was a great success, the net profits realized being £66 5s. 7d

The Dunedin "Age" is giving lengthy abstracts of Mr. Charles Bright's lectures there. Two of them on the Manhood and Divinity of Christ, have been reprinted in pamphlet form by the committee of the local Freethought Association. They are in reply to a series of lectures by a Presbyterirn professor named Salmond, and appear to be an able and logical refutation of his arguments.

By the Gawler "Standard" of September 21st, we observe that a meeting of persons desirous of forming a society for the investigation of spiritual phenomena was to be held at the local Institute on the 23rd.

DR. J. M. PEEBLES.

We have received a fraternal letter from Dr. Peebles, who reached home after his second journey round the world on May 28th, strengthened in body and enriched in mind by his varied experiences in many lands. He was entertained at the *Banner of Light* office on June the 1st, by the proprietors of that journal, and a large number of the leading spiritualists. Among the congratulatory addresses was one spoken by a spirit, calling himself "Grandfather George," which want of space prevents our reproducing. We, however, find room for Dr. Peebles' reply which, briefly summarising the events of his tour, will be interesting to his many Australian friends:—

"Chairman and Friends all: It was with emotions of of joy tempered with some timidity that I rise to respond to the congratulatory "Welcome Home" to which we have listened with unabated pleasure. The nature were cold indeed, and the heart could be little else than marbled stone, that was not affected by the spirit utterances just breathed through the mediumistic lips of Mrs. Rudd, so well-known and loved by you all.

"Intellectual, social and sympathetic beings, we naturally appreciate the friendship of our fellows and the approval of the gods that guard us. And though a persistent traveller for years, studying the origin of races, Eastern religions, and ancient ruins in distant lands, I have not forgotten my friends of the past, nor their many personal kindnesses. Accordingly it is highly gratifying to meet on the present occasion men and women—*Spiritualists*—some of whom I have known personally, and I may say intimately, for a full score of years. Precious are such unselfish friendships, such undying memories!

"On my first voyage I was accompanied by Dr. E. C. Dunn, prompt, energetic, intellectual, and gifted with rich phases of mediumship. Inspirational and clairvoyant, he is eminently successful as a medical practitioner. Rumors and reports had reached me that he had renounced Spiritualism. I did not believe it. Dr. Dunn is still a Spiritualist and a medium. He denounced only the *frauds* of pretentious mediums and imposters; and he did this in the interests of genuine mediums. On this second voyage round the world *via* Ceylon, Madras, Mauritius, Madagascar, Natal, Capetown, and St. Helena, I was accompanied as far as Australia by Mr. Thomas Walker, the trance orator. Both of us being public speakers, he remained in Sydney and I went directly to Melbourne. He did an excellent work in Sydney and New Zealand. We corresponded frequently. Bits of this correspondence, with some magnificent communications from Mungo Park relative to a discussion in spirit life upon the soul's final absorption, I shall some time publish. Visiting Wigan, England, where Mr. Walker's parents reside, I met his two brothers, both mediums, the eldest recently married. Thomas received, so his parents informed me, a very fair education, and was employed for a year as a *teacher*. He is an excellent shorthand reporter, has a very retentive memory, and is well read up in the freshest expressions of scientific research. This is as it should be, and for it Mr. Walker should be commended. All mediums should be studious, because whatever they put into their heads by study and culture, intelligent spirits can bring out, added thereto 'an hundred fold.'

"Spiritualism has a strong hold in Australia. I remained in the country two months longer than was my original purpose. Mr. Tyerman, a very sound and able speaker addressing the Spiritualists and Liberalists for three years, has planned a visit to America. Mr. Terry, ever true and faithful to the cause of angel-ministry, publishes the *Harbinger of Light*, and conducts the Lyceum with marked ability. Britten and Walker will find the field continually widening and the sheaves ripening.

"The sea-passage to Ceylon, that wave-washed gem of beauty and the authoritative head-centre of Buddhism, was delightful. This island has a history of prodigious length. The Vedda tribe is not so brutish as is represented. The Buddhist priests are kind hearted and deeplyde voted to their religion. The arch-priest and president of the Buddhist College at Colombo I found both communicative and cultured. Two Buddhist priests purpose to visit America next autumn, to preach Buddha and begin the work of evangelizing this Christian nation. Here, said the Doctor (holding up some specimens), are some of the ola-leaves from their sacred *Tri-pikatas*. I met some Spiritualists, both among the English and Buddhists of the island.

"During that terrible famine that startled and stirred a world's sympathies, I reached Southern India, a country that has for me a thousand charms, because the birthland of one of the oldest religions and at the present the fruitful paradise of magic. While travelling in the mountainous ranges of India, where the gymnosophists and sages of antiquity had kept their fires perpetually burning, it seemed to me that it was not the first time I had gazed on that magnificent scenery, but rather that I had been cradled 'mid that tropical luxuriance, and that the searching, soothing monsoons had in bygone ages lulled me to sleep. Ay, more, it seemed as if I had travelled over those hills and through those valleys in the trusting days of my childhood, and that I was really as ancient as India herself! I distributed considerable spiritual literature both in India and the South Sea Islands. The Spiritualism of the native Hindus is largely affected with obsessions and the superstitions of demon-worship.

"In Natal, a fine fertile country in South-east Africa, I was on the camping-ground of Bishop Colenso. He is a bishop still—officiates—and draws his Government stipend. Far back in the country from the coast I saw many of the native African tribes. Returning to D'Urban, the harbour-city of the Natal Province, I lectured upon Spiritualism, the mayor of the city occupying the chair.

"Cape Town, a city of some 30,000, in South Africa, has besides many liberal minds a few devoted Spiritualists. The most prominent is Dr. Hutchinson. He is a zealous pioneer, and for several years has purchased and scattered broadcast all through South Africa a vast number of books, pamphlets, and spiritualistic newspapers. Freely, trustingly, he has sown, and rich will the harvest be. I met the bumptious, bragging H. M. Stanley in South Africa. It is generally conceded that he will never be crucified for exactness of statement! In a public speech he grossly insulted Spiritualists, by comparing English and American mediums to the snake and witch doctor business of the low African tribes. Righteously indignant, I peacefully thrashed him on the rostrum and through the daily press. And this reminds me that the Cape Town journals, with one exception, treated me with great consideration and impartiality. My lectures upon Spiritualism in the Athenæum Hall were well attended—all of which was the fulfilment of prophecy made to that faithful and indefatigable worker, Dr. Hutchinson.

"In all these so-called heathen countries of the East I found Spiritualists, both among the scattering Europeans and the natives. And it may be said without successful contradiction that Spiritualism in a crude or more cultured form is cosmopolitan. It is one of the demonstrated *facts* of the nineteenth century, and must hereafter take its place as such in history.

"Spiritualism has made rapid strides in England since my first visit in 1869. The contrast is as cheering as striking. Not only did I give the first public lecture upon Spiritualism in Constantinople, speak at the first seance party at a Russian's residence at Smyrna, introduce Spiritualism as a Western movement into Ceylon and India, and give the first public lectures in Natal and Cape Town, South Africa; but I gave the first regular course of Sunday lectures upon Spiritualism ever given in England. They were delivered in the Cavendish Rooms, under the auspices of that veteran worker, James Burns. When the Everitts were present, complimentary 'rappings' were frequently heard. The distinguished naturalist, Alfred R. Wallace, was a frequent attendant. English thinkers and scientists are much braver and more independent than Americans.

"J. J. Morse, highly esteemed as a man, is doing most effective work in the lecture-field; and so also is Mr. Wallis, Mr. Colville, Mrs. Beattie, Mr. Lamont and others. Mr. Fletcher, well known to many of you, is

crowded at times with visitors seeking converse with their spirit friends, Mr. Lambelle, a most excellent medium, is now assisting Mr. Burns upon the *Medium and Daybreak*. London has several superior mediums. Mr. Harrison publishes the *Spiritualist*. The *Psychological Review* is a fresh and fair new-comer into the field of Spiritualist literature. Success to it and all the liberal journals in the kingdom. Clans and cliques, insinuations and jealousies, though hardly as common there as in some of the American cities, are *too* common. The Jews do not deal with the Samaritans, and so history repeats itself. Beautiful was that trait in Jesus that led him to 'eat with publicans and sinners,' and 'go about doing good.'

"Spiritualism as a phenomenon, as a diffusive liberalizing principle is making rapid headway all through my parish, and *my parish* is as extensive as the world. Still, there are many dark corners, and there is much missionary work to be done. And whenever Spiritualists, Free-religionists, Liberal Unitarians, and *Liberalists* of all and *no* names, will so sink minor differences, and so co-operate and systematize their efforts as to present one solid phalanx to the enemies of progress, their labours will tell, and the victory come! A stool with one leg will not stand. The velocipede often trips and throws its rider. Differentiation is just as much a law of the universe as unity. I believe in no such rigid uniformity as that promulgated by the Pope of Rome with one rut for his roadway, one wheel for his chariot, one 'seal' for salvation, and that Roman Catholicism! Education, toleration, and a rational religion based upon the divine Fatherhood, the universal brotherhood, the ministry of angels and the harmonial development of a common humanity—these are wants pertaining to this sunset period of the nineteenth century!

"Spiritualism is a divine work. It is interrelated *to* and rooted *in* God, for God, as Jesus said, is 'a Spirit'—the infinite Spirit-Presence of the universe. And Spiritualists must tolerate each other upon all subordinate matters. We live upon different planes. None must judge another's motives. Condemnation is not Christ-like. Theoretical notions that would be repugnant to me may please and profit others. Each must select for himself. Our toleration should only be excelled by our charity.

"Since we have no established church, no formal creed, no fixed method of procedure, relative to rolling on the car of progress, all helpers must be granted wide liberty of action. Our great thinker, Emerson, says, 'The spontaneous suffer from the acute malignancy of the mole-eyed. The most commendable heroism is that which *does*. We cannot disenchant. We cannot impoverish ourselves by obedience; but by humility we rise, by obedience we command, by poverty we are rich, by dying we live."

"Travels deepen my faith in and my love for humanity. All are our father's children; all races are brothers, and all lands have their myths, their psychological marvels and their spiritual aspirations. One destiny awaits all! This is the growing gospel of the century. It demonstrates a future existence, comforts the mourner, and meets the deep spiritual demands of the soul. To its promulgation I have consecrated my life, and, under the providence of God and his good angels, I am determined to toil on till I hear the shout of the 'harvest home'—the pilgrimage ended.

"In justice to myself, to Mrs. Peebles, and all others assembled, I cannot close without thanking the proprietors of the *Banner of Light* for projecting and perfecting this reception, so gratifying to me, and I hope satisfactory and edifying to you."

Mr. Thomas Walker.—Arrangements are pending between the Victorian Association of Spiritualists and the above excellent trance speaker for a course of lectures in Melbourne, which, if satisfactorily concluded, will lead to his commencing the series on next or following Sunday. He has just completed a most successful course at the Victoria Theatre, Sydney.

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The latter portion of our correspondent E. F. Hughes' letter (page 1476) will be replied to in our next issue.—Ed. *H. L.*

A BUDDHIST PRIEST COMING TO AMERICA.

Mrs. Mary M. Peebles, who came on from Hammonton, N.J., to meet Dr. Peebles and attend his reception by the Boston Spiritualists, brought him, among other letters from foreign lands, one from Mr. Doncarolis, a prominent Buddhist layman of Colombo, Ceylon, specifying upon what terms a distinguished Buddhist priest would visit America, and spend a year as a missionary to begin the work of evangelising the corrupt and war-practising Christians of America.

This Buddhist, Doncarolis, corroborates what we previously published in one of Dr. Peebles's letters, that two Buddhist priests were already in France, the one teaching the Pali language to some University linguists, and the other labouring as a missionary among the Catholics.

We hope that nothing may prevent the contemplated visit of this Buddhist priest.

MR. JESSE SHEPARD AT SYDNEY.

The "St. Leonard's Recorder" gives an account of the above medium's first sitting in Sydney. There were eighteen persons present, and whilst the medium was enumerating the mediumistic qualities of some of them, the sitters were touched with hands, voices were heard, and appearances seen. Mr. Shepard also described several spirits, who were in every instance recognised by some one of the company. He then took his seat at the piano, the instrument giving forth such a volume of sound that it seemed as if drums, cymbals, and even trumpets could be distinctly heard, "whilst," says the editor, "the melody was weird and wonderfully beautiful, unlike anything we ever heard before." The medium was then controlled to sing in both male and female voices, the vocal performances being spoken of as eulogistically as the instrumental, the writer concluding as follows:—"This much is certain, his musical performances stamp him as one of the wonders of the age."

JOTTINGS ON PASSING EVENTS.
By Lambda.

Oh those printers! I don't wonder at that New York editor who travelled through the states armed with a double-barrelled gun, in search of the compositor who had made him say something ridiculous in print. In my last "jottings" I spoke of "Salvation of the Heathen." This the printer transmuted into "savalation," &c. That was bad enough, but imagine my joy the other day, when sitting in a metropolitan reading-room, I heard two "Christian" coxcombs, who were perusing my effusion, make themselves merry over "the *salivation* of the Heathen!"

Speaking of printers, let me beg the person or persons who are conducting the publication of the Green and Walker Debate, to "hurry up," as I have an orthodox friend to whom I desire to make a present at *Christmas time* and a copy of said discussion will suit the purpose admirably.

Boston has got a theological "lion" in the person of the Rev. Joseph Cook, and, as is usual in this wonder-seeking generation, crowds flock to view the "phenomenon." Mr. Cook has resurrected fossil theology, and he defends it with vigor, earnestness, and ability. Viewed *tout ensemble*, however, his performances are scarcely satisfactory. Facts and fancies, reason and rhapsody, gospel and *gush*, are jumbled together in infinite confusion. That unfortunate characteristic of most American writers, *inaccuracy*, is prominent in all Mr. Cook's utterances. Huxley, Tyndall, and Spencer are credited with sentiments which they would view with considerable surprise, whilst the poets fare very little better at the preacher's hands.

The *Southern Cross* strongly commends an article in the *Presbyterian Review* for September, bearing the easily recognised initials "J.G.S." entitled "The Proof and the Acceptance." Says the *Cross*, "We have read nothiug like it for some time." So say I. Let me give this extract from it:—"There never was a book which

has been subjected to such sharp and searching criticism as the Bible, and which still holds its own so free from any serious charge of error in fact." Free from even any *serious charge*, observe! If it were not that the writer of the article is known to be a thoroughly wide-awake theologian, one would be inclined to regard him as a sort of clerical Rip Van Winkle, who had been sleeping through the ages from Spinoza up to "Supernatural Religion." Free from any serious charge of error in fact? Oh certainly. Only excepting charges of error in History, Morality, Philosophy and Science of every kind; charges preferred by Voltaire, Paine, Taylor, Parker, Colenso, Greg, Matthew Arnold, Strauss, Feuerbach, Baur, Lessing, Kuenen, Keim and hosts of other "insignificant carpers!" I used to look upon such charges as somewhat "serious." But thanks to J.G.S., I am now set right. We live and learn you see.

Let me urge my readers to procure and disseminate a little *brochure* that has recently appeared againt us, entitled "Spiritism Unveiled," by Dr. W. Clarke. They should read it themselves, for it affords a striking proof that the spirit of those old Church Fathers who, as Mosheim tells us, used to falsify in word and deed "for the glory of God," still animates the "Christian" ranks. They should circulate it widely, for it contains an unwilling testimony to the truth and reality of our cause. Like Balaam of old, Dr. Clarke thought to curse his enemies, but lo, he hath blessed them!

CONCERNING PROFESSIONAL MEDIUMSHIP.

We cordially endorse the following article by Mr. J. J. Morse, which appears in the *Medium and Daybreak* of July 12th, 1878. It is a protest against one of the many absurd objections launched against Spiritualism by its irrational opponents. Why do not the Christian objectors, who form the majority, apply it to their clergymen who are, as a rule, well feed for giving far inferior evidence to the world than the better class of professional mediums.

"The position of the professional medium is in some respects a peculiar one. He appears to be asking pay for acts he has no part in originating. It is urged that as his powers are "gifts" he has no right to receive pay for their exercise. Is such the fact? If so, who confers the gift in question? What entitles to the receipt of it? What entails its withdrawal? A careful enquiry into the matter of mediumship brings out the fact that it is constitutional, and no more a "gift" than the ability to sing, play music, carve, paint, or write poetry. All these are "gifts" that can be cultivated in persons of proper temperament, so, likewise, is mediumship a matter of temperament and judicious training. It is superstitious to argue that "mediumship" is any more sacred or divine than any other possibility attached to human nature. True, it can be degraded—so can all other functions; at the same time, like other departments, the susceptibility to development and exaltation is practically limitless. Mediumship not being a special favour conferred on a select few, it at once takes rank with all other mental and bodily endowments, the exercise of which constitutes labor. The "professional" medium is but a worker in the hive of human life. It is no more discreditable to him that he should take pay for his services than that the poet should take money for his latest epic. The discredit rests with those who, under a mask of sentiment, would avoid rendering a just reward for the time and strength consumed in their gratification. No murmur is raised against the enormous sums spent in maintaining doctrines that are actually untrue, supported pecuniarily by many who eloquently denounce professional mediumship. If circumstances fix an individual as a professional worker in Spiritualism, surely the position is as honourable as that of a minister devoted to preaching doctrines which Spiritualists repudiate.

Let us consider under what conditions mediumship can be pursued. There are actually but two, though three are found in practice—first, private; next, public; and lastly, that nondescript intermediate condition that desires all the honours of public work, but declines its responsibilities and duties. The condition of private mediums, as non-professionals, is substantially this: following some fixed employment during the day, they devote their spare time at night to the development of mediumship and the upbuilding of Spiritualism in their own quarter, at times extending their labours over their own town, and perhaps penetrating occasionally the district they live in. Many times have the sublime teachings of Spiritualism been scattered abroad by self-sacrificing workers of this class. Occasionally—but very rarely at present—we have those with means who can afford to devote their time entirely to a work national in its scope, taking no pay for their services, enlisted in the Cause by their love of its truths, and throwing aside their personal ambition in their devotion to the vocation they fulfil. How many, though, of these earnest-hearted private workers have been invited to the houses of the wealthy Spiritualists, and sent away with barest thanks! If, then, the fortune of the non-professional medium is not so happy after all, what is the state of those who work for money?

All those who have become public mediums are people who have possessed medium powers that have raised them above the average of mediumistic development. Hence, being more sought after, and in nearly all cases finding the pursuit of daily duties incompatible with the development of their mediumship, they have had to accept one or other of the alternatives—either give up daily labour, or relinquish mediumship. Urged by friends, in and out of the form, they ultimately devote their whole time to mediumship. Directly many of their old friends forsake them, others sneer and make mean insinuations, and a few right nobly stand by the poor medium. Yet the case is just this: the medium devotes all his time, strength, and exceptional developments to the service of Spiritualists, and, doing so, it is but honest he should be rewarded when his services are obtained.

(*To be continued.*)

A Dramatic Entertainment for the benefit of the Lyceum was given by the Misses Hickson and Miss Slade, assisted by several gentlemen amateurs, at Lowe's Rooms, on the 26th ult. It was well attended, and passed off most successfully. The monetary results, however, were not so large as expected, several unforeseen expenses having arisen—the hiring of chairs, &c., and the payment of a tax of £1 10s. to Mr. G. Coppin, the pieces selected being in his list. This is rather discouraging to the ladies, who have worked very hard in hopes of giving a substantial amount to the Lyceum.

The Beechworth paper speaks in the highest terms of Mrs. Britten's lectures in that district, and in a lengthy report of one of them eulogises both her oratory and the matter of her lecture.

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